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ABSTRACT

Analysis of the data included in current studies and literature shows a need for Chicanos to counsel and provide therapy for other Chicanos (people of Mexican American descent who are bilingual and bicultural and who view themselves as political activists). Racism and sexism play a major role in the high drop-out rate of Chicanos and Chicanas from colleges and universities. Chicanos have psychological and social problems which are a direct result of a society that refuses to acknowledge the negative effects of being members of an oppressed class (a social and cultural group of people who live in a disadvantaged economic, psychological, educational, and social environment within the larger society). Chicanas are not encouraged to educate themselves or to seek new experiences outside of their homes. Chicano children and youth are subjected to the negative influence of a stereotype that depicts Anglos as beautiful, intelligent, successful, and powerful. Both the media and educational institutions promote this image. Because socialization experiences give Chicano counselors more understanding and empathy with their students than Anglo counelors have, it is essential that more Chicanos become counselors and educators. In these positions, they should then act as social change agents. (CM)

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CHICANOS COUNSELING CHICANOS
IS IT NECESSARY?

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ABSTRACT

From a review of current studies and literature, an analysis of the data by the author concludes that Chicanos are necessary to counsel and provide therapy for other Chicanos (as). In addition, future trends for counseling members of an oppressed class in our society appears to be contingent upon more "minorities" earning advanced degrees in counseling or a related field. The author further concludes that racism and sexism play a major role in the high drop-out rate of Chicanos (as) from institutions of higher learning.

Although human beings in general develop a set of values, perceptions, self-concept and behavioral methods of dealing with their world in a similar process, there are individual and group differences. The similar process can be viewed in the following conceptual frame of reference.

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AGE	FREUD	ERICKSON	PIAGET	KOHLBERG
0-18 mos.			SENSORIMOTOR physical action no language or symbols adjustment to environment	moral stages of development must be obtained, sequentially obtainment of cognitive stages is necessary but not sufficient for moral stages to be obtained
0-2 yrs.	ORAL	TRUST MISTRUST		
18 mos. - 7 yrs.			PREOPERATIONAL language becomes sophisticated can deal with objects and symbols	STAGE 0 What I want and like is good
2-4 yrs.	ANAL	AUTONOMY SHAME		
4-7 yrs.	PHALLIC	INITIATIVE GUILT		
7-12 yrs.	LATENCY	MASTERY INFERIORITY	CONCRETE OPERATIONS 1. categorical classifications 2. reversible concrete thought	PRECONVENTIONAL STAGES 1. Punishment obedience orientation 2. you scratch my back and I'l scratch yours--no loyalty gratitude or justice
12 years	ADOLESCENCE	IDENTITY CRISIS	FORMAL OPERATIONS hypothetical deductive thinking thought emphasis shifts from real to possible prepositional thinking abstract thought	CONVENTIONAL STAGES 3. behavior judged by intention seeks approval by being nice 4. maintenanee of social order
	ADULTHOOD	INTIMACY PRODUCTIVITY etc.		POST CONVENTIOANL STAGES 5a. No longer adopts social & political beliefs without question 5b. internal conscience orientation leans toward directedness no clear universal 6. motivation to conform isn't social but internal conforms to avoid self-condemnation
	MIDDLE-AGE			
	OLD-AGE			
	DEATH			

As can be seen by these particular theories, we pass through various stages of human development that eventually formulates our personalities. It appears from these models that human growth and development have an international basis. In other words, regardless if people come from an agricultural or a technological society, language, behavioral skills, values, perceptions, mores, physical growth and cognition all occur more or less through a systematic process called human development. Within this frame of reference, however, are individual and group differences.

For example, a child who is physically or mentally handicapped or both will not develop as rapidly or as completely as a child who is not suffering from any major disabilities. Quite simply, we are not all born equally. However, what if a group of children who were born into slavery came into this world with all of their mental and physical attributes intact, would they progress as much as the children of the slaveowners? The answer is obvious, they could not become as well-equipped emotionally or educationally. Black children growing up in a slave society would have mental health problems intimately connected with no reading, writing and math skills and a self-concept based on being a non-human person. It it only logical to see that not only the children in a slave society suffered such consequences, but so do any members of an oppressed class. Perhaps the damage is in degrees, but it is there.

It is doubtful if the Black children would even pass through all of the stages of human development. Although both groups of

children would probably go through the stages of prenatal life, infancy, childhood, pre-adolescence, adolescence, young adulthood and adulthood, the slaves in general would not be as "humanized" as the slaveowners. They would not, because it is possible that their childhood would be damaging and they would move very quickly into adulthood with emotional and educational scars. The point simply is that although there are international phases of human development, there are major differences in the process between individuals in the same social group and between social groups themselves.

This paper will address the issue of Chicanos (as) being members of an oppressed class who find ourselves in a social position that requires counseling by other Chicanos. An oppressed class of people are a social and cultural group of people who live in a disadvantaged economic, psychological, educational and social environment within the larger society. As the paper will show, there are valid reasons why Chicanos (as) should counsel people from their own group. Chicanos are people of Mexican-American descendents who are bilingual and bicultural and who view themselves as political activists. Mexican-Americans meet the same criterion except they do not view themselves as activists. Chicanas are subject to the same social and psychological problems as their male counterparts, except they also have to face sexist discrimination.

According to the study of selected socioeconomic characteristics of ethnic minorities based on the 1970 census[1] "the median

educational attainment of the Chicana (9.1 years) is three years behind that for the entire female population (12.1 years). Almost half of all Mexican-American women sixteen years old and over will not go beyond the eighth grade. In comparison, only a quarter of all women in the United States have not gone beyond the eighth grade. The high school drop-out rate of 1970 has increased."[2] For example, in 1976 Mexican-American females were more than twice as likely to be out of school than white males. Her role is further complicated by the macho syndrome which is expressed through the frustrations of the males suffering from oppressed inferiority. The men more often force the women into submissiveness. The female children learn this is the way they must respond to all of the male members, consequently they are indoctrinated into the oppressive cycle of male dominance. Research has shown that[3] the more oppressed the male partner is treated the more submissive and oppressed his female partner will be treated by him.

Combine these factors with parents leading the Chicanita not to the Universities but to the altar for marriage; it is not surprising that so many of our young women are dropping out of school. For the most part she is not encouraged to educate herself or to seek new experiences outside her home. In addition, she lacks models to identify with. She needs Brown female heroines to identify with. The young female child is raised to think of her identity as being the perfect mother and wife who serves her family.

Chicanos and Chicanas are victims of racism and sexism which have a negative effect on their self-concepts and their mental health. Although textbooks used in clinical psychology and counseling programs list numerous examples of personal problems such as compulsive obsessive behaviors, personality disorders, phobias and so forth, there is no mention of racism and sexism as psychological maladies requiring treatment. Furthermore, there is no mention of the negative effects of racism and sexism on Chicanos resulting in high drop-out rates in school, high levels of unemployment and related personal griefs, despairs, frustrations and anger. In other words, from a mental health perspective, the counseling and psychotherapeutic professions are not meeting the needs of a people suffering from overt and covert racist and sexist experiences.

Manuel reports[4] "that according to the 1960 Census there were 21 percent of the families in the general population of the Southwest who have incomes less than $3,000. By comparison, 34.8 percent of the Spanish-surnamed families in the Southwest have incomes less than $3,000. These percentages vary from state to state. California has the least number of both general population and Spanish-surnamed families with incomes less than $3,000, with 14.1 percent of families in the general population and 19.1 percent Spanish-surnamed families. In Texas 32.5 percent of the families in the general population and 51.6 percent of Spanish-surnamed families have incomes less than $3,000 per year. If $3,000 is considered to be the poverty level, then one out of two Spanish-surnamed

families residing in Texas lives in poverty. The differential between Anglo and Spanish surname families is most striking when the percentages of families with $10,000 or more are reviewed. Among the general population of the Southwest, 17.6 percent of the total number of families have incomes of $10,000 or more, as compared with 6.6 percent of the Spanish-surname families. In Texas, these figures are: general population, 11.8 percent of all families; Spanish-surname population 2.7 percent. These figures combined with Luna's findings[5] that Mexican-Americans have not fully accepted Anglo values relating to time, change, success, efficiency, education and modes of communication make it necessary to have social change Chicano counselors, counsel members of their social group.

An important prerequisite for Chicano counselors in having understanding and empathy with their students is having similar life experiences, although Chicano counselors have been educated in the Anglo dominant social institutions, we have had similar socialization experiences in the barrios of the Southwest. This provides a strong basis for empathic relationships with our students. As Chicano counselors we have studied and understand the theories of Erickson, Skinner, Berne, Freud, Piaget and Kolberg (to mention but a few theorists). However, our interpretations are based on the damaging developmental process that occurs to members of an educational, political and economical oppressed group of people.

As Chicano children we were indoctrinated on an ongoing basis that white is beautiful and intelligent. This message was transmitted through various forms of the media and through our educational institutions. Wherever we looked (and still do) we saw billboards advertising products using mostly Anglos. Anglos drinking milk, Anglos sunbathing, Anglos driving cars, etc. On television we saw (and still do) Anglos working in banks, Anglos camping and fishing together, enjoying holidays, family gatherings, etc. The films we viewed on television or at the theaters are Anglo dominant. The heroes are white, the major casting is white. If it is a science fiction film or a western or a drama, Anglos dominate the senses.

This bombardment of negative stimuli greatly affects our Chicano youth and even if they are not conscious of the messages, it is there. The message is white succeeds and white is in power. Consequently our youth formulate a subconscious attitude on failure, and a negative self-concept. And research indicates that there is a positive correlation between self-concept and success in school.

When our youth enter school they are told indirectly and subtly but in a powerful manner that Anglos not Chicanos succeed. (Chicanos, when used in this context, include both females and males). We are told this by the presence of mostly Anglo teachers, principles, heroes in the textbooks, Anglo explorers, families, Anglos in the educational films and so forth. According to a study by Maes and Rinaldi[6] large numbers of Chicano children will not complete the eighth grade and the others will only have about

a 50 to one chance of finishing college. In another study by Popp and Patterson[7] the population of Mexican-American college students in the Southwest is only about 144,000 as of 1971. According to them, only about one out of every four Mexican-Americans who receive their high school diplomas enter college and out of those entering college only one out of every five complete their college education. And although Spanish-surname enrollment in all colleges in the nation tripled between 1968 and 1971, on a percentage basis of total enrollment Chicanos only rose from 1.7 percent of the total population to 2.4 percent. Also Mexican-American enrollment is heavily concentrated in the two-year institutions. The study goes on to show that the most popular field for Chicanos was in the liberal arts 85 percent, whereas engineering, the physical sciences and business each had 3.1 percent.

As the studies indicate, Chicanos are under-represented in institutions of higher education and then the drop-out rate is high. According to a study[8] by Cross and Maldonado in 1971 and[9,10] Voltress in 1969, Anglo counselors who have not resolved their own negative attitudes towards "minorities" bring these attitudes into the counseling sessions. It is not surprising that so many of our Chicano youth are "failing." The system appears to be designed to fail our youth.

In an article written by Armando Morales[11] he stated the following are some of the social problems found in Mexican-American communities throughout the Southwest:

(1) Deficient educational achievement due to the lack of educational opportunities.

(2) Excessive unemployment.

(3) Broken homes.

(4) Excessive numbers of police in Chicano communities.

(5) Police community friction.

(6) The over-representation of Mexican-Americans in jails and prisons for offenses related to drinking and drugs.

(7) The gross lack of mental health treatment facilities in Chicano communities.

(8) The general unavailability of psychiatric manpower particularly bilingual mental health professionals, and

(9) Societal resistance toward the funding of community mental health centers directed and under Mexican-American community control and sanction.

According to Morales, these conditions are found in Mexican-American, Black, Puerto Rican and other poor ethnic communities because of: (1) the brutal discrimination that Americans have toward the poor, (2) racism, (3) an institutionalized delivery system of mental health care that emphasizes quality individualized psychiatric treatment for the affluent and an almost complete denial of quality mental health care for those that need the services the most, the poor. Morales goes on to say that racism was the underlying dynamic of the "manifest destiny" called upon by the American expansionists to support the conquest of Mexico in the mid 1800's. It was written that "Mexicans must amalgamate

or be lost in the superior vigor of the Anglo-Saxon race or they must utterly perish."[11] This Anglo-Saxon dogma became the chief element in American racism in the imperial era that politically and economically has exploited the Mexican-American in the United States up to the present time.

In 1969[12] at the annual convention of the American Psychological Association (APA), members of the Black Student Psychological Association (BSPA) confronted the President of the APA. The confrontation was based on the following demands: (1) the recruitment of Black students into psychology, (2) the recruitment of Black faculty members into psychology, (3) the gathering and dissemination of information concerning the availability of various sources of financial aid to Black students, (4) the design and provision of programs offering meaningful community experiences for Black students in the field of psychology, and (5) the research and development of terminal programs at all degree levels that would equip Black students with the tools necessary to function within the Black community.

The demands made by the Blacks could very well have been made by Chicanos, Native Americans or Asians for the same reasons. We need representation in the field of counseling and mental health. One main reason explaining why there were no Chicanos organized in the same way as the Blacks is simply based on a number of factors. A survey by Boxley and Wagner[13] in 1971 revealed that 78.6 percent of all universities with APA and non-APA approved clinical training programs had only six Chicano graduate students

enrolled. Another factor obviously is the lack of exposure to Chicano models who have attained even the semblance of success in psychology. It becomes increasingly obvious that a massive professional and financial effort must be implemented if these problems are to be overcome. It is understandable that with only fewer than ten Chicano graduate students in Clinical Psychology in the nation, that Chicanos are not organized in the field of Counseling and Clinical Psychology.

These statistics further reinforce the social reality of the plight of Chicanos and poor people in this society and often poor and Chicano are synonymous. Another survey from the same article by Boxley and Wagner in 1971 showed that two-thirds of the clients associated in training with psychology departments were serving 95 percent to 100 percent white clients. Counseling services related to colleges and academic performance, the second major source of services and training were providing 75 percent of their services to the white population.

This is due to the under-representation of Chicanos and other minorities in American universities. The same survey also showed that out of the 95 percent to 100 percent and 75 percent group, 65 percent of that population was middle and upper-middle class Anglos. It is clear by these figures and the related information in this report that Chicanos must in fact counsel Chicanos and be involved in social change activities. As Chicano counselors, our roles are vital in assisting or assuring the successful completion of their education. It is also clear that as Chicano counselors

we have the necessary formal education balanced with our own socialization to provide mental health care for our students.

Another survey quoted in the above article by Schofield in 1964 describes the white therapist syndrome termed the "YAVIS Syndrome." A common tendency among Anglo middle-class therapists was to select clients who are successful, young, attractive, intelligent, well-educated, verbal and introspective (YAVIS). Consequently, a minority-group individual may find it difficult to find and receive psychotherapy. A study by Yomomoto[14] and colleagues in 1969, who followed the progress of 594 patients seen at the Los Angeles County General Hospital Psychiatric Outpatient Clinic, found that Chicanos and Blacks were often discharged or seen for minimal supportive psychotherapy. This particular study differed from pervious studies in that racial as well as socioeconomic differences were considered. There was a clear indicator that patients were treated differently depending on factors of ethnic group membership or race.

CONCLUSION

It is apparent that there is a disproportionate number of young members of the Chicano population dropping out of school. Perhaps it is more a matter of our youth being pushed out of school by a social system that has historically discriminated against Third World People than "dropping" out. Regardless of the reforms that grew out of the conflict and protest years of the 1960's, little significant institutionalized changes have occurred. It is necessary, therefore, as Chicano educators and counselors, to take a firm position on reversing the serious mental health problems that are afflicting our youth and their parents and family members. In other words, the psychological crisis confronting our particular social group is based on multiple variables that are comprised of:

(1) High levels of unemployment
(2) High levels of "dropping" out of school
(3) Family and marital problems
(4) Identity crisis
(5) Sex role conflicts
(6) Drug abuse
(7) Disproportional numbers in prisons
(8) Apathy
(9) Anger and frustration
(10) Feelings of despair
(11) Lack of representation in the media

(12) Little if any real political power

These psychological and social problems are a direct result of a society that refuses to acknowledge the negative effects of being members of an oppressed class. Certainly Anglos suffer from similar discomforting emotions, but the salient point is that the causes of Chicano discomforts are directly related to the harmful influences of development a "personality" under the circumstances presented in the body of the paper.

However, we are a courageous people who have pride and fortitude and in spite of such tremendous walls between us and the larger society, we continue to advance ourselves, but it is not enough. In order to enhance more growth we must continue to counsel and support each other psychologically and humanistically. In this process we must maintain our cultural identity without practicing sexism against our females.

The Chicanos not only have to contend with the existing racism but they also have to struggle against the barriers of sexism that they face on a daily basis within the barrios and the larger social system. Chicanas are a minority within a minority. Our cultural sisters not only have to fight against the Anglo male and female oppressive forces in the United States, but they also have to face the traditional mores regarding their roles as women. By assisting the Chicanas in liberating themselves from the psychological chains imposed upon them, we will liberate ourselves. Only by changing our views toward our interpersonal relationships

will we be able to advance our females and in the process we will advance ourselves.

It is clear that the existing power structure is only going to provide a limited amount of counseling and mental health programs. The responsibilities to a large extent belong to us. As counselors and educators we need to:

(1) Be social change agents
(2) Design and implement groups for Chicanos and Chicanas to discuss role changes
(3) Be aware of the special problems of being a Chicana
(4) Take steps to assure more Chicanos (as) receiving advanced degrees as one method of bringing about change
(5) Provide more marital and intimate relationship counseling
(6) Confront the universities in which we find ourselves regarding irrelevant training in Clinical Psychology and related departments
(7) Publish more reports pertaining to Chicanos (as) Counseling Chicanos (as).

We need to continue such activities until such a time that we as Chicanos and other Third World People have parity. Until that time we have the responsibility to move in the direction of better circumstances for the generations of tomorrow.

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